

9/15/2011

Bainbridge Island Planning Commission and Staff:

Thank you for the extensive work and research you have done regarding COBI Shoreline Master Program.

I have some concerns to address regarding proposed changes for Point Monroe sand spit and lagoon.

The "Existing Designation Map" of Shoreline Environment Designations for Point Monroe includes a very small portion of the lagoon as an Aquatic Conservancy Shoreline area. Efforts to expand this area to the entire lagoon ("Proposed Designation Map") should be rejected.

The aquatic conservancy environment is intended to preserve those portions of the marine waters whose existing natural state is relatively free of human influence. Hence, the existing conservancy designation is confined to a small portion of the lagoon where the shoreline is undeveloped. The rest of the lagoon shoreline area, with its highly dense residential community and dozens of docks, floats and boats, is not appropriate for special conservancy designation, and that is why it was never included in the original 1996 update.

Nothing has changed, except further building and development on the sand spit.

There is no compelling reason to expand the aquatic conservancy designation to the entire lagoon. Nor is there a legal or statutory obligation requiring you to take such extreme, local action. Indeed, considering the disruption and financial injury such a designation would provoke, it probably makes better sense to avoid changing the rules at all. No one likes to have the rules changed on them in the middle of any game, especially the big game of real life involving home and family.

I urge you do as the state requires, and no more.

Our shoreline homes should be considered conforming. We followed all of the rules, obtained all of the permits, and have paid property taxes as "conforming" status properties for years. Again, the proposed zoning change to nonconforming status changes the rules in the middle of the game. These are the kind of actions that people find unfair. Basically, it comes across as un-American.

If COBI really cared about the Point Monroe lagoon, they would have addressed the serious storm runoff problem that occurs here every winter when overflow is channeled unfiltered into the lagoon via the creek culvert at Fay Bainbridge Park. I have documentation and pictures from as far back as 1992 that Point Monroe residents have submitted to COBI, asking for help, and receiving nothing in return.

The culvert pours tons of mud and contaminates into the lagoon every year. If anything, the problem has grown worse in recent years—not better!

Aside: I keep hearing that many of these shoreline protection measures are being considered in order to “save the salmon.” It may interest you to know that we have small schools of chum salmon in the lagoon every year, usually in late November, and I’m sure they would be happy to establish a new home here if they had adequate stream habitat. I doubt, however, that the small creek in the park has enough year-round flow to sustain them and, in any case, culverts and salmon do not mix.

The residents are in favor, also, of a minimum wake and vessel speed limit within the lagoon, similar to the one posted for Port Madison.

As you have witnessed at your meetings, people do not want the government expanding its control over their lives! People are really upset about the changes being considered. You have an opportunity to do what is fair. Please do it.

Respectfully,

Tom Snyder
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cc: Bainbridge Island City Council